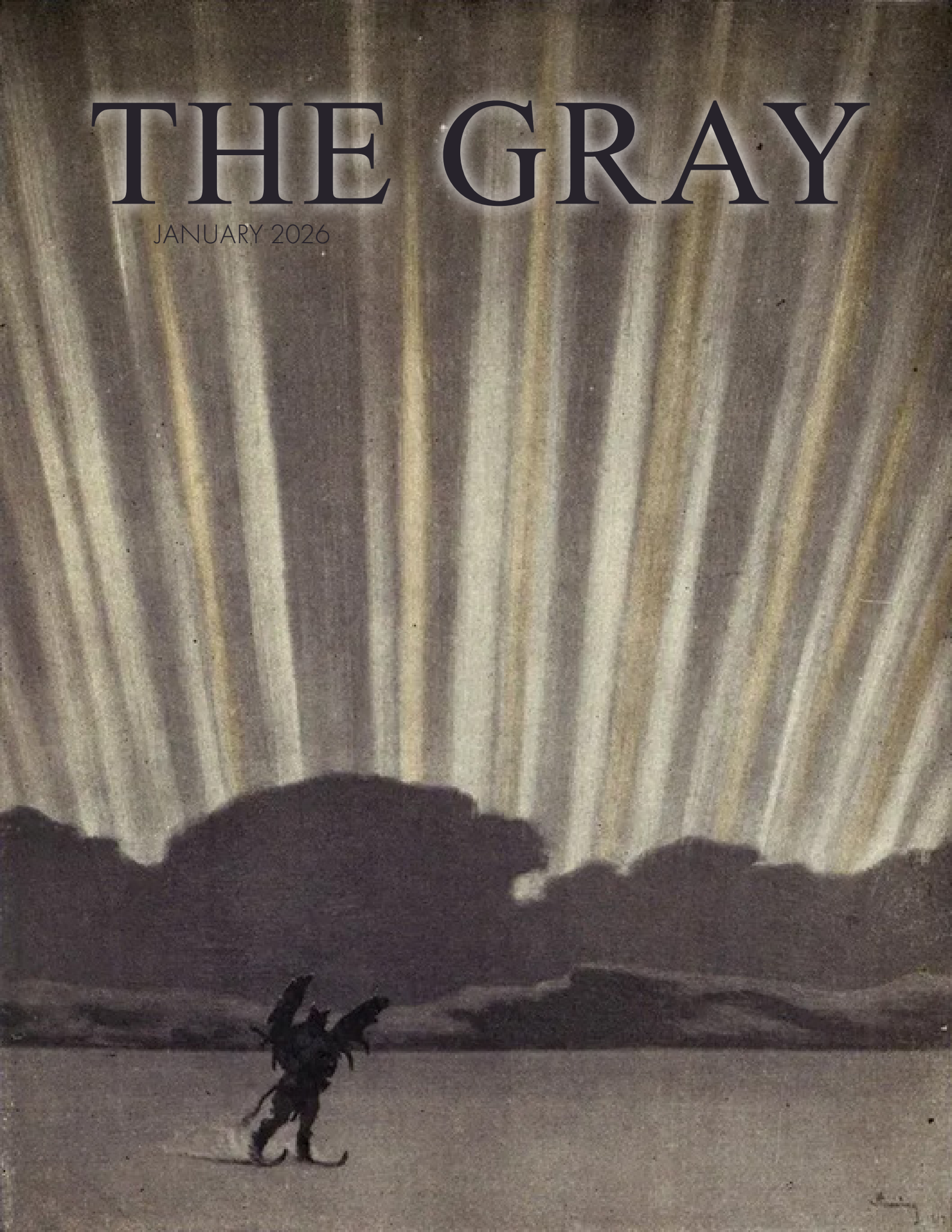


THE GRAY

JANUARY 2026



WELCOME TO THE GRAY



Return of the Headhunter by Arthur Heming, 1921.
Public Domain.

ON THE COVER

Return of the Headhunter
Arthur Heming (1870 - 1940)
Oil on Canvas, 1921

Arthur Heming was a painter, traveler, novelist, and illustrator. For most of his life, the “painter of the great white north” worked in a monochrome scheme of black, white, and yellow tones, due to color blindness.

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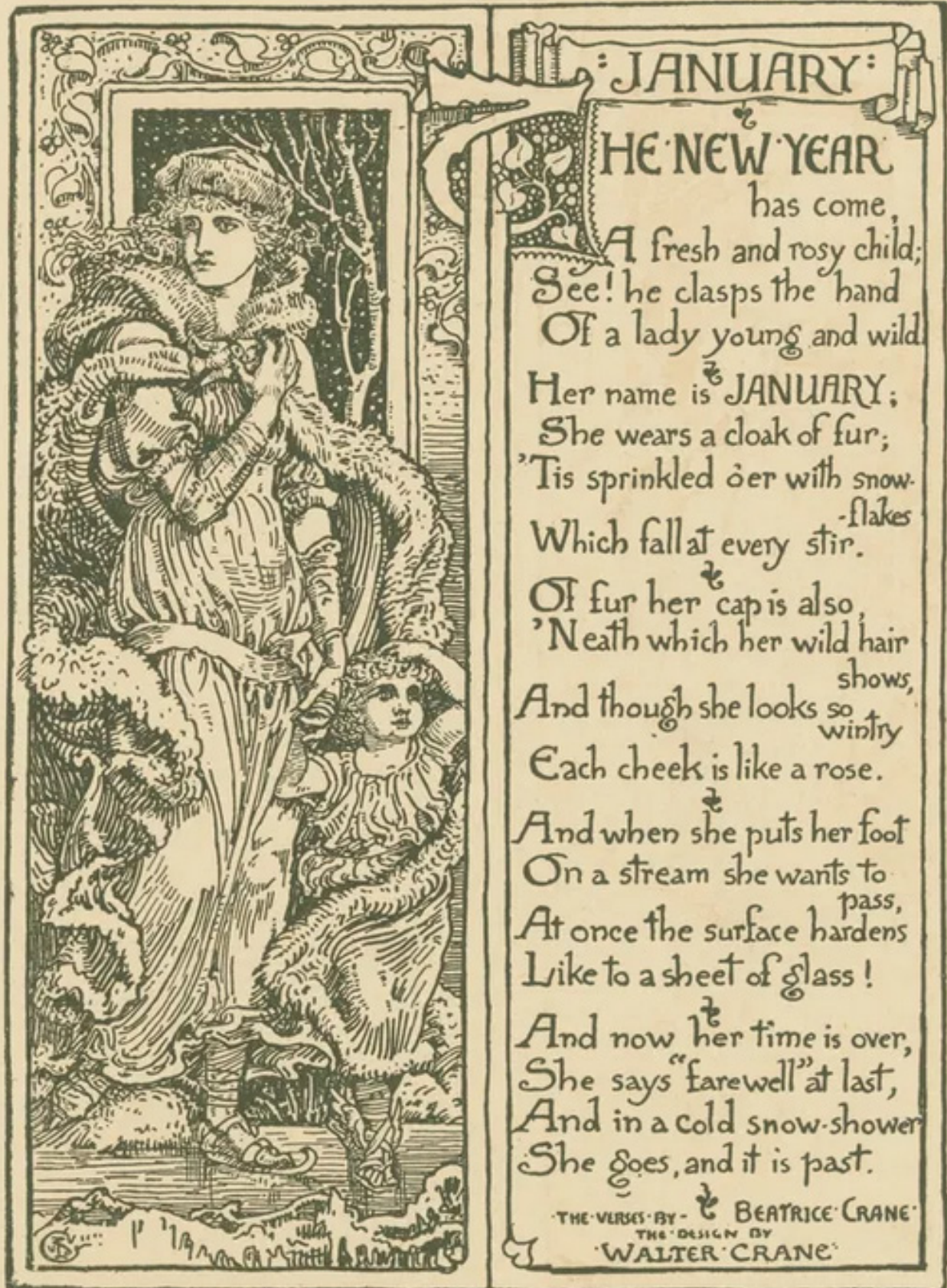
ABOUT THE GRAY

THE GRAY is an independent contributor-supported magazine that strives to deepen our understanding of the human experience and our knowledge of the world we share.

THE GRAY is a digital magazine published quarterly in the United States. All past and present issues can be downloaded or read online anytime. No subscription is required, however please consider joining our mailing list and following us on social media to help support our continuation.

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January by Walter and Beatrice Crane, 1889. Image sourced from the Public Domain Image Archive / Harvard University.

THE GRAY

NIGHTSHADES, VESPERTINES, AND VENEFICIUM:
PLANTS AND OUR SHADOW SELVES

SNOWDROPS

THE GHOST FLOWER OF WINTER

CHRISTINA WILKE-BURBACH, PhD



Photo courtesy of Christina Wilke-Burbach.

Among the first living things to pierce the frozen soil each year, the humble snowdrop—*Galanthus nivalis*—has long been regarded as more than a flower. To botanists, it is a hardy perennial with delicate white petals. To witches and mystics, it is a herald of thresholds and exists in a liminal space: between winter and spring, life and death, despair and hope. Few plants carry such a contradictory blend of purity and danger, beauty and poison, blessing and omen.

Snowdrops are small, rarely rising more than six inches above the ground, but their appearance is unmistakable. Each plant bears a single drooping bloom, its outer petals pure white and its inner petals marked with a green crescent or teardrop. The flower hangs downward like a lantern or a bowed head, giving it an air of modesty—or mourning.

In the dim light of late winter, a cluster of snowdrops can look almost spectral. Their white petals glow against a backdrop of snow and frost and their nodding heads sway even when the air is still. Many cultures have described them as “ghost flowers,” believing they carry the spirits of the departed or act as guides for souls wandering between worlds.

Snowdrops bloom astonishingly early—often in January or February, many times even pushing through snow. This defiance of the season has made them symbols of endurance and rebirth, but also of intrusion. In medieval Europe, anything that bloomed “out of its proper time” was considered touched by magick.

Their early blooming also made them a natural companion to Candlemas (February 2), a Christian holiday layered atop older pagan rites of purification and seasonal transition celebrated as Imbolc. In some regions, snowdrops were called “Candlemas Bells,” believed to ring silently to announce the turning of the year. Candlemas and Imbolc sit side by side on the calendar, but they come from different worlds even as they celebrate the same turning of the year. Imbolc, rooted in ancient Celtic tradition and typically observed on February 1st, marks the first subtle stirring of spring—the moment when the earth begins to wake beneath winter’s frost. It is deeply tied to the goddess Brigid, whose domains include fire, healing, poetry, and protection, and whose presence gives the festival a tone of

inspiration and renewal. Imbolc traditions often involve lighting hearth fires, crafting Brigid’s crosses, cleansing the home, and performing weather divination. Candlemas, celebrated on February 2nd, is a Christian feast that commemorates the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple and the Purification of Mary. Over time, it absorbed many older seasonal customs, becoming a day associated with blessed candles, processions, and rituals of spiritual purification. While Candlemas emphasizes Christ as a source of divine light, Imbolc focuses on the returning light of nature and the awakening of the land. Both celebrations signify that spring is near. The blooming of snowdrops is deeply emblematic of this moment in the seasonal cycle, capturing the quiet shift from winter’s stillness to the first stirrings of spring.

Snowdrops carry a dual symbolism that is unusually stark. On one hand, they represent hope, purity, and the promise of spring. On the other, they have long been associated with death, graveyards, and misfortune. In Victorian florioraphy, snowdrops symbolize consolation and the return of brighter days. In Eastern European folklore, they were said to be the first flowers created after the expulsion from Eden, gifted to Eve as a sign that winter would not last forever. Some witches use snowdrops in spells for renewal, healing, and clearing stagnant energy.

In parts of England, bringing snowdrops indoors was considered a dire omen. Their drooping heads were thought to resemble shrouds or corpses. Finding a single snowdrop in the garden was said to foretell a death in the household. Because they often grow in old graveyards, many believed they sprouted from the tears of the dead. This duality—hope and death intertwined—makes snowdrops uniquely suited to paranormal lore. They are flowers of the threshold, blooming where endings and beginnings blur.

Despite their delicate appearance, snowdrops are poisonous. All parts of the plant contain alkaloids, particularly galantamine, which can cause nausea, dizziness, and in large amounts, paralysis. Historically, this toxicity added to their mystique. Anything that could heal or harm depending on the dose was considered inherently magickal.

Interestingly, galantamine is now used in modern medicine to treat symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. The idea that a "memory flower" blooms in the dead of winter is the ultimate spark of hope.

In folklore, the plant's poison was believed to:

- Ward off evil spirits
- Break curses
- Protect against nightmares
- Cleanse spaces of lingering ghosts


Witches sometimes planted snowdrops around their homes as a protective boundary—an icy white circle that spirits were said to avoid.

Snowdrops have appeared in European magical practices for centuries, and although their uses vary, several themes consistently weave through different traditions. They were commonly used in rituals of purification, especially because they bloom during seasonal cleansing rites; witches swept away "winter spirits," purified tools and altars, and prepared their homes for new beginnings with snowdrop-infused water believed to banish stagnant or malevolent energies. They also played a role in spells of transition, aiding practitioners in letting go of grief, moving through emotional thresholds, ending harmful cycles, and inviting new opportunities—an association strengthened by the flower's ability to push through frozen ground as a symbol of resilience and transformation. In matters of spirit communication, snowdrops were sometimes placed on graves to guide the dead or encourage dreams of ancestors, their ghostly appearance and liminal nature making them natural tools for such work; some mediums even claimed they enhanced clairvoyance when kept under a pillow or worn in a charm bag, though their toxicity made this practice risky. Finally, snowdrops were valued in protection magic, with dried bundles hung above doors to repel malicious spirits, envy, bad luck, and ill-intentioned magic, their white petals believed to reflect negativity back to its source.

Snowdrops emerge from frozen earth like spirits rising from the underworld, whispering that winter is ending but also reminding us of what lies beneath the soil. They are gentle yet dangerous, pure yet uncanny. In the paranormal world, few plants embody the tension between light and shadow as elegantly as the snowdrop; existing in the liminal space between the dead of winter and the promise of spring. ■



LIVE BEYOND
with
Sarah & Jodi



For Event Line-Up
Go To: www.chaplainjodi.me
Click on Events

BELIEVE. YOU'RE
HALFWAY THERE.

Each retreat keeps getting better and better. I learned so much this weekend and truly consider this space to live and grow a haven. Sarah and Jodi are fabulous teachers and have built a wonderful community together. Can't wait till the next one!
Elizabeth A.

Jodi and Sarah are legit. Their passion for their expertise is palatable. They teach with humor and love. You could sense their care for every participant was sincere. The opportunity to interact with these two unique and gifted women was priceless. Lessons were real world, and smartly taught to bring meaning, empowerment and spirituality to daily living. So glad that we took the leap and registered!
Renee H.

WINTER'S STILLNESS: THE SACRED ART OF HIBERNATION

JESSICA HOCH



Photo courtesy of Jessica Hoch.

Winter does not arrive loudly. It slips in quietly, shortening the days, muting the landscape, and asking life to move inward rather than forward. Beneath snow and frozen ground, nothing appears to be happening — and yet everything is.

This is the season of hibernation, reflection, and refinement. A time when nature rests, repairs, and recalibrates itself in the dark. Long before goal-setting and productivity culture existed, winter was understood as a sacred pause; an invitation to tend the

inner world with the same care we give the outer one during brighter months.

In a culture that equates stillness with stagnation, winter asks us to remember a deeper truth: rest is not the absence of growth. It is the soil that makes growth possible.

Crystals, born from immense pressure and time, carry this same wisdom. They form slowly, invisibly, and with great patience, making them quiet companions for winter's inward journey.

The Quiet Intelligence of Hibernation

Hibernation is often mistaken for inactivity, but it is a highly intelligent process. Animals that hibernate conserve energy, strengthen their systems, and emerge renewed when conditions are right. Winter invites us into a similar rhythm. One of restoration rather than acceleration.

This is the season when reflection feels less like analysis and more like listening. The mind softens. The nervous system asks for gentleness. Old emotions rise not to be solved, but to be witnessed.

During this time, the crystals we are drawn to tend to be soothing rather than stimulating. Stones that offer comfort, compassion, and quiet clarity. They do not push us toward answers; they create space for them to arrive in their own time.

Lepidolite, with its subtle lilac hue, carries an energy that feels like a long exhale. It steadies the emotional body, easing anxiety and releasing the pressure to constantly improve or perform. In winter's slower tempo, lepidolite supports the nervous system as we learn to rest without apology.

Moonstone, luminous and reflective, mirrors winter's softened light. It speaks to cycles, reminding us that every phase has purpose. What feels dormant now is not lost; it is incubating. Moonstone encourages trust in timing, allowing us to sit peacefully with uncertainty rather than rushing toward clarity.

Listening Beneath the Silence

Winter has a way of amplifying what we've been too busy to hear. When the noise quiets, something else begins to speak — not loudly, but persistently. Subtle emotions. Old truths. Desires that no longer fit the shape of our lives. This is where winter reflection becomes less about thinking and more about feeling. Less about answers and more about presence. Stillness is not empty. It is densely populated with information we only access when we stop moving.

Crystals offer a tactile anchor during this listening. Holding something solid and ancient in the hand reminds us that not everything needs to be understood immediately. Some things ask to be felt slowly, with patience and care.

In this way, winter becomes a dialogue rather than a void. A conversation between what has been and what is quietly forming. The answers may not arrive as words, but as sensations. A softening in the chest, a release in the breath, a sense of inner alignment that cannot be rushed.

Compassion as a Winter Practice

As the external world grows quieter, the inner voice can grow louder — and not always kinder. Winter often surfaces old doubts, tender memories, and the parts of ourselves we usually outrun. This is where compassion becomes essential.

Rose quartz reveals its deepest work in this season. Beyond romantic love, it offers gentleness turned inward, softening self-judgment and encouraging emotional safety. Rose quartz reminds us that tending the heart is not indulgent; it is necessary, especially when emotional reserves feel thin.

Smoky quartz, grounding and steady, supports reflection that might otherwise feel heavy. It anchors us in the present moment and helps release emotional residue we no longer need to carry forward. Smoky quartz teaches us that darkness is not something to escape. It is a place where unnecessary weight can be set down.

Together, these stones help create a container where reflection feels supported rather than overwhelming, where honesty can arise without harm.

Winter as a Refining Season

Unlike autumn, which strips away what no longer belongs, winter refines what remains. It asks us to sit with ourselves as we are — not to reinvent, but to listen more closely.

Amethyst carries a quiet spiritual clarity that feels especially aligned with winter nights. It offers comfort when questions linger unanswered and reminds us that wisdom does not always arrive through effort. Sometimes it comes through dreams, intuition, and moments of still awareness.

Winter does not demand conclusions. It invites honesty. It teaches that refinement happens not through force, but through presence.

Crystals reflect this truth effortlessly. They do not hurry. They do not explain themselves. They simply exist, holding space while unseen processes unfold beneath the surface.

Honoring the Pause

Winter is not asking us to disappear. It is asking us to listen. To soften expectations. To move gently with ourselves. To trust the quiet work happening in the dark.

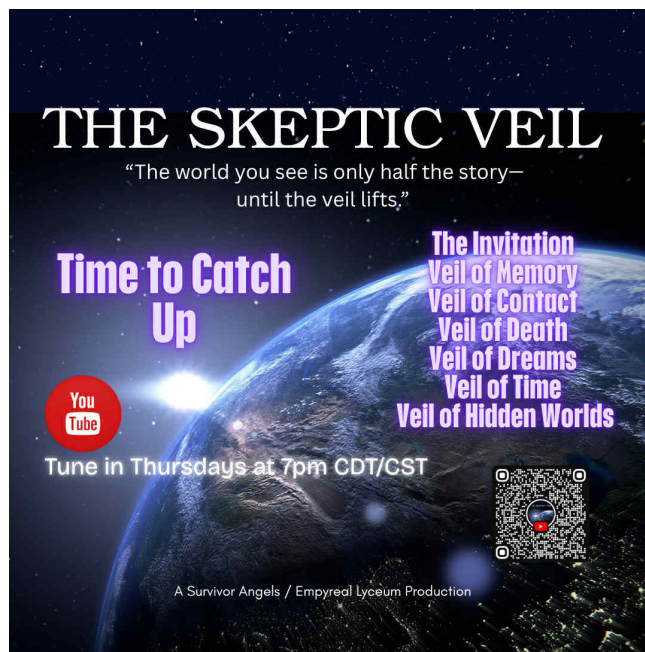
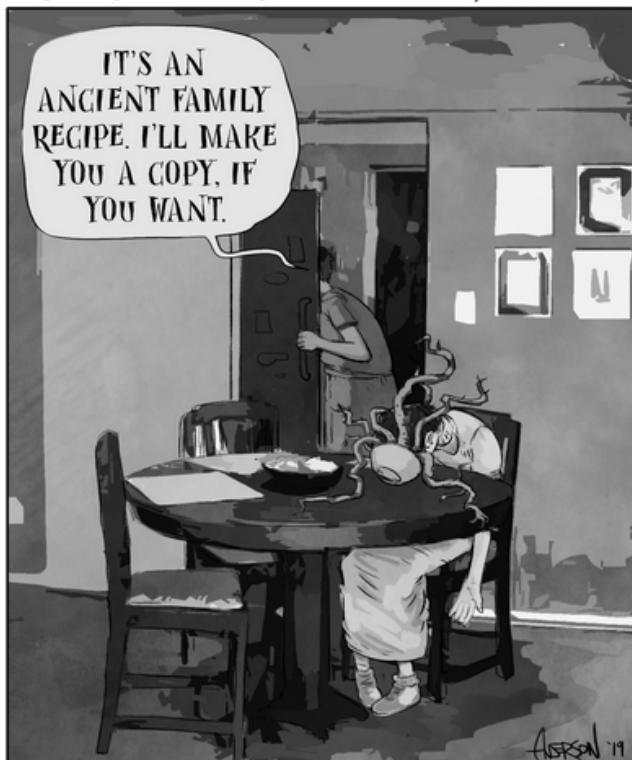
By honoring hibernation, reflection, and self-compassion, we align with a rhythm far older than urgency — one that understands that life does not vanish in stillness, it gathers strength.

Crystals remind us of this ancient truth: depth forms slowly, clarity arrives softly, and renewal begins long before spring is visible.

This season, may you rest without guilt, reflect without judgment, and trust the unseen becoming within you. ■

PRIMORDIAL SYRUP

by Brian Anderson



SUPERSTITIONS AND DEATH:
**WINTER OMENS
OF DEATH**

CHRISTINA WILKE-BURBACH, PhD



Photo courtesy of Christina Wilke-Burbach.

Winter has always been closely associated with death. Across Europe and North America, the coldest months gave rise to some haunting funeral and cemetery superstitions. When the ground freezes, when breath fogs in the air, and when the dark world feels closer to the veil, people historically believed the dead behaved differently—and that the living needed extra protection. In many parts of the world, winter was believed to be a time when spirits stirred more freely, omens sharpened, and the boundary between worlds thinned like ice underfoot. Death

folklore in the cold months is eerie and chilling—full of spectral warnings, prophetic weather signs, and rituals meant to ward off restless souls.

In many regions, a winter funeral was considered a powerful omen. Some believed that if a person died during a snowstorm, their spirit would wander restlessly until the earth thawed in spring, unable to settle into the frozen earth. Others were convinced that a funeral held on a bright, bitterly cold day foretold a year of good fortune for the family, as though the crisp air purified the soul's passage. But if

the weather suddenly warmed during a winter burial, it was said to invite another death soon after as the softening ground symbolized a door left open.

Cemeteries themselves were thought to be more active in winter. Many cultures believed that winter—especially the period between the winter solstice and early February (Imbolc)—was a time when spirits roamed freely. Because the earth was “asleep,” folklore suggested that spirits roamed more freely above ground. In parts of Scandinavia, people avoided walking through graveyards after sunset in the winter months, believing the dead were more likely to appear as flickering lights or drifting figures in the snow. In the British Isles, it was considered dangerous to brush snow off a gravestone; doing so was thought to “wake” the spirit beneath, who might follow the person home. Some communities even left a small path of untouched snow leading from the cemetery gate to the newest grave so the soul could find its way without disturbing the others.

There were also practical superstitions tied to the frozen ground. In rural areas where digging a grave was difficult or impossible, bodies were sometimes kept in special “corpse houses” or charnel sheds until spring. This delay gave rise to the belief that souls lingered longer in winter, hovering near their bodies until the earth softened enough to bury them. Families often placed candles in windows during these bitter cold months to guide the spirit and keep it from becoming lost or restless.

Winter flowers—or the lack of them—also shaped supernatural beliefs. If snowdrops or hellebores bloomed near a grave during the cold months, it was taken as a sign that the deceased was at peace. Lack of winter-blooming flowers indicated the soul was unsettled or trying to rise. Snow itself became a supernatural medium. Its purity made it a canvas for signs, and its silence made every disturbance and mark meaningful. If snow melted faster on a particular grave, it was said the spirit beneath was restless or dissatisfied.

A grave that remained snow-covered long after others thawed was believed to belong to a peaceful soul. Footprints in the snow near graves were meaningful. Fox tracks were a blessing and a protective symbol, representing guardianship. Dog tracks foretold a coming death in the family. Crow or raven tracks were considered dire warnings. Human-like prints appearing overnight were said to be the dead walking. All animal tracks in the snow were read as portents.

Hoarfrost is one of winter’s most enchanting—and eeriest—phenomena. It forms when cold surfaces meet moisture-laden air, creating delicate, feathery crystals that cling to branches, windows, gravestones, and fences. Unlike ordinary frost, which looks like a thin glaze, hoarfrost grows outward in intricate spikes and lace-like patterns, giving the world a ghostly, otherworldly sheen. In folklore, hoarfrost has long been treated as a kind of winter handwriting and read like runes. People once believed the patterns on windows were messages from spirits or omens carried by the cold. A downward-pointing frost feather on a window was said to foretell illness or death in the household, while upward-sweeping patterns meant protection or the passing of danger. In some regions, hoarfrost on a grave was interpreted as a sign that the spirit beneath was restless, while a grave that remained bare and unfrosted was believed to belong to a peaceful soul. Even the word itself carries a hint of the uncanny—“hoar” comes from an Old English term meaning “ancient” or “venerable,” referring to the frost’s white, aged appearance. It’s as though winter briefly drapes the world in a veil of ancient, quiet magic.

Yule, the ancient midwinter festival (December into January), has long been entwined with beliefs about death, rebirth, and the restless spirits that roam the frozen world. Celebrated around the winter solstice, Yule marks the darkest point of the year, a moment when the sun seems to stop in the sky and the boundary between the living and the dead feels unusually thin. In many Northern European traditions, this was the

season when the Wild Hunt swept across the night sky: a spectral procession of the dead led by a god, ancestor-spirit, or fearsome huntsman on horses, such as Odin. People believed that to hear the Hunt's horns in the winter wind foretold a coming death, while seeing the riders themselves was a sign that one's own soul might be taken. During Yule, doors were barred, fires were kept burning, and offerings were left outside to appease the riders and keep them from entering the home. Winter omens surrounding death were plentiful during this season: a candle that refused to stay lit was said to signal a nearby spirit; a sudden crack of ice or wood was interpreted as a soul passing; and animals behaving strangely—especially dogs howling at nothing, or owls calling near a window—were believed to be messengers of the dead. Even the weather carried warnings: a thaw during Yule was thought to “open the way” for death in the coming year, while a deep freeze was believed to seal the spirits beneath the earth. Together, Yule, the Wild Hunt, and winter death omens form a tapestry of folklore that reflects humanity's ancient fear of the dark months, when the world feels suspended between endings and beginnings, and when the unseen seems closest of all.

Many of these superstitions reflect the psychological weight of winter itself. Short days, long nights, darkness, harsh living conditions, lack of food, and the stark quiet of the season made death ever so close. The frozen landscape seemed to suspend time, blurring the boundary between the living and the dead. Whether comforting or unsettling, these beliefs helped communities make sense of loss during the harshest months of the year, blurring the quiet hush of winter with rituals of grief and loss. ■





On the Frail Ice, the whirring Skate becomes an Instrument of Fate.

Artist: Thomas Rowlandson
Aquatint with Watercolor, 1860

Public Domain.

THE GRAY

DIRTY SNOWBALLS AND IRON GODS

HUMANITY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COSMOS

JASON BLOCK



Comets and meteorites have held a particular, and almost universally fearful, fascination for mankind for most of our existence. Eventually, improvements in telescope technology led to a more accurate understanding of the origin and composition of these spatial phenomena, changing a supernatural mystique to one focused on the infinite variety of the cosmos, but that innate fear and wonder of objects from beyond our atmosphere still remains for many people. The Heaven's Gate movement of the late 20th Century, for example, believed the comet Hale-Bopp to be followed by spacecraft manned by supremely evolved former human beings, one that would provide a means of transcendence to members of the organization. To bridge the gap between Earth and their starship, the members of Heaven's Gate killed their earthly vessels to ascend to another form, a process that took the form of mass suicide.

Comets were usually viewed as being more sinister portents, often linked by ancient soothsayers to natural disasters. In the western world, these aerial fireballs were viewed with fear and awe. Not all comets signified ruination, though. A comet appearing after the death of Julius Caesar was viewed by many as an ascension of the murdered Roman dictator, heralding his rebirth as a god. Some Biblical scholars believe that the "star" that led the Magi to the young Christ, marking the Epiphany, was actually a comet.

Sages in the east also viewed comets, or "pheasant stars" (thanks to their tails), as ill omens, but also assiduously recorded their observations and kept meticulous schedules of when, where, and in what manner they appeared. Asian records of comets proved invaluable to later scientists who demystified them, determining they were nothing but dirty snowballs orbiting the sun and releasing a reflective halo of gas and debris.

Meteorites, meanwhile, have maintained more of their mystique. Often thought to be weapons of the gods hurled at earth, the iron-rich space rocks were more glorified than feared. The earliest iron artifacts currently known were decorative items, the Gerzeh Beads, made over five thousand years ago from a meteorite that landed in Egypt. Meteoric iron, in fact, was used by human beings in the creation of tools and objects long before we smelted the terrestrial metal.

Egyptians transformed meteoric iron into the opulent Dagger of Tutankhamen, a beautiful knife found in the pharaoh's tomb. The Dagger had actually been a gift to King Tut's grandfather, Amenhotep III, from another regional leader, reflected in records that refer the object as made of "iron from the sky."

There are multiple historical references to an image of the goddess Diana (Artemis) that fell from the god, Jupiter, and was displayed at the temple in Ephesus. This object may have been a piece of a meteorite crudely fashioned into a facsimile of the goddess, or revered as a "baetyl," a sacred stone that could represent the divine to mortal minds. As the image of Diana fell from Jupiter, the Black Stone set in the eastern corner of the Kaaba in Mecca was said to have come from the sky, linking Heaven and Earth. The mystic lore of the Black Stone traces its origin to the Garden of Eden, but many modern scholars believe the Black Stone fell to earth as a meteorite, linking the terrestrial and celestial realms in a literal way.

Our fascination with extraterrestrial phenomena is deeply rooted in our history, predating civilization and continuing to modern times, morphing and changing with our knowledge and understanding, but never failing to excite our curiosity and our wonder. ■

THE HUMAN FASCINATION: WHY WE LOVE TRUE CRIME

L. A. PREUSS



Our lurid fascination with true crime is nothing new. Throughout history, there have been news articles and pamphlets released about the most heinous events, such as the Salem Witch Trials in Massachusetts, USA. The community boiled over with hysteria in the face of fear. That hysteria took hold and continued with the sensationalizing of the alleged crimes, and information on the supposed witches, which was shared in community pamphlets along with public trials and executions. During the time of Jack the Ripper in London, UK, not only was fear created by newspaper reports of the crimes, but it was further heightened by letters to the newspaper, allegedly written by Jack the Ripper himself. In the 1930s, the true crime genre in publishing became popular, and this fascination has endured to the present day.

The true crime genre has evolved from a specialized market to a widespread obsession. Over 50% of Americans consume true crime in some form, with women making up the highest percentage. Turn to any streaming service, podcast, or social media platform, and you will undoubtedly see various sources of true crime stories and crime drama. True crime is the most common topic among top-ranked podcasts (Nasser & Aubin, 2023). The more unnerving, psychologically fascinating, and bizarre a story is, the more followers crave additional information. The cases contain all the basics of great storytelling – interesting characters, a sense of urgency, and heightened tension that resolves at the conclusion.

What's driving this obsession? Examining the psychology behind the true crime phenomenon reveals five core psychological reasons for the fascination.

A Strange Curiosity

People are inherently inquisitive about predators, just as cavemen knew spotting a predator was essential for survival, the same is true for the modern person. There is an innate curiosity to glimpse the darkest parts of the human psyche, a fascination with that which is taboo in proper society, all in an endless quest to understand evil. People want to know what happens when an offender crosses the moral or ethical boundaries into deviant behavior. There is a fascination in understanding the complexities of offenders and the potential for cruelty. Followers of true crime also develop true empathy and an intense emotional connection to the victim(s), who can no longer speak for themselves.

According to neurologists, this human curiosity comes from the amygdala, the brain's fear-processing hub that evolved to keep us alive by fixating on threats, understanding the darkest parts of human nature, and being intensely fascinated by what is taboo.

A Need for Justice

Curiosity also brings forth our second psychological element, drawing people to true crime - the need to determine if justice was served, and if not, who failed whom? We have a craving to make sense of everything. The darker the crime, the more powerless the public feels, the more they seek to know that the perpetrators face punishment. Followers of true crime need to feel a sense of moral order as they peer into the realm of evil. The overarching themes of guilt, innocence, justice, and punishment resonate deeply, almost on a primal level, with the individual. The true crime follower may also benefit from reaffirming their personal values and moral compass.

A Love of Problem Solving

It is a well-known fact that human beings learn best when solving problems. Solving puzzles, like deconstructing a mystery, challenges the brain. People love trying to figure out patterns, behaviors, and analyzing why something happened. For that reason, followers enjoy the challenge of piecing together

clues, analyzing motives, and solving the crime before the investigators. In fact, many individuals find it very satisfying to solve the case and see justice done.

A Craving for Adrenaline and Fear

We are all hardwired to be alert to danger, but there is a thrill in watching the situation unfold before you. Visiting haunted houses, riding roller coasters, and watching horror movies all give us the same dopamine rush. That exhilarating dump of adrenaline and the experience of the fight-or-flight response. Indulging in true crime allows the individual to experience that same fear, horror, and thrill, the same surge in a controlled, safe environment. The thrill without risk. Another part of this curiosity is catharsis – a way to be aware of the possible and become immune to it to reduce stress and anxiety.

This thrill craving equates to psychological exposure therapy, where the individual confronts fears and reduces their power, in a safe place with no real risk. This type of exposure also helps build emotional resilience by meeting the psychological need for a sense of control, safety, and emotional regulation. In fact, it might be considered a form of benign bravery to find enjoyment in experiencing something in a safe environment that would be unpleasant if it were really happening.

A Sense of Control

The true crime follower may use affective forecasting not only to imagine the event but also to anticipate their emotional response to it, how they will feel in the moment, what emotions they may experience, and how they can overcome any adverse reactions. Unfortunately, this may include impact bias, in which they underestimate the emotional impact an event will have on them. They can overcome the fear in a controlled environment, thereby reducing its grip. In behavioral rehearsal, an individual imagines what they fear and practices their response to that event repeatedly, until they feel confident in their ability to handle the situation. We all want to understand the threats in our environment and feel confident in our ability to overcome them.

As the world seems to spiral continually out of control, people crave understanding of that which appears chaotic and unpredictable. They need a sense of safety through exposure to and knowledge of what happened to others, so they know what to watch out for in their own lives. According to a 2025 Edison Research report, 70% of female true crime followers find empowerment in following true crime and relating the events to real-life risks and precautionary safety strategies. Fear drives them to learn as much as possible about the cases so they can be more vigilant about their own safety. If the serial killer started by dropping drugs into a female victim's drink at a club, then once she was incapacitated, violated, and killed, the female true crime consumer may become more aware of their beverage when out at a club. If the offender entered a residence through an unlocked door, the female is more apt to secure her property at night or when home alone.

Whatever brought you to the world of following true crime, you are most certainly not alone. Fascination with the darkness and evil that lurks among us continues to hold many true crime followers tightly in its psychological grip. ■



THE GRAY

THE ANGELIC BIO-GRID:

HOW THE ELEMENTS, THE ANGELS, AND THE
ARCHITECTURE OF LIGHT SHAPE THE HUMAN SOUL

CHAPLAIN JODI DEHN

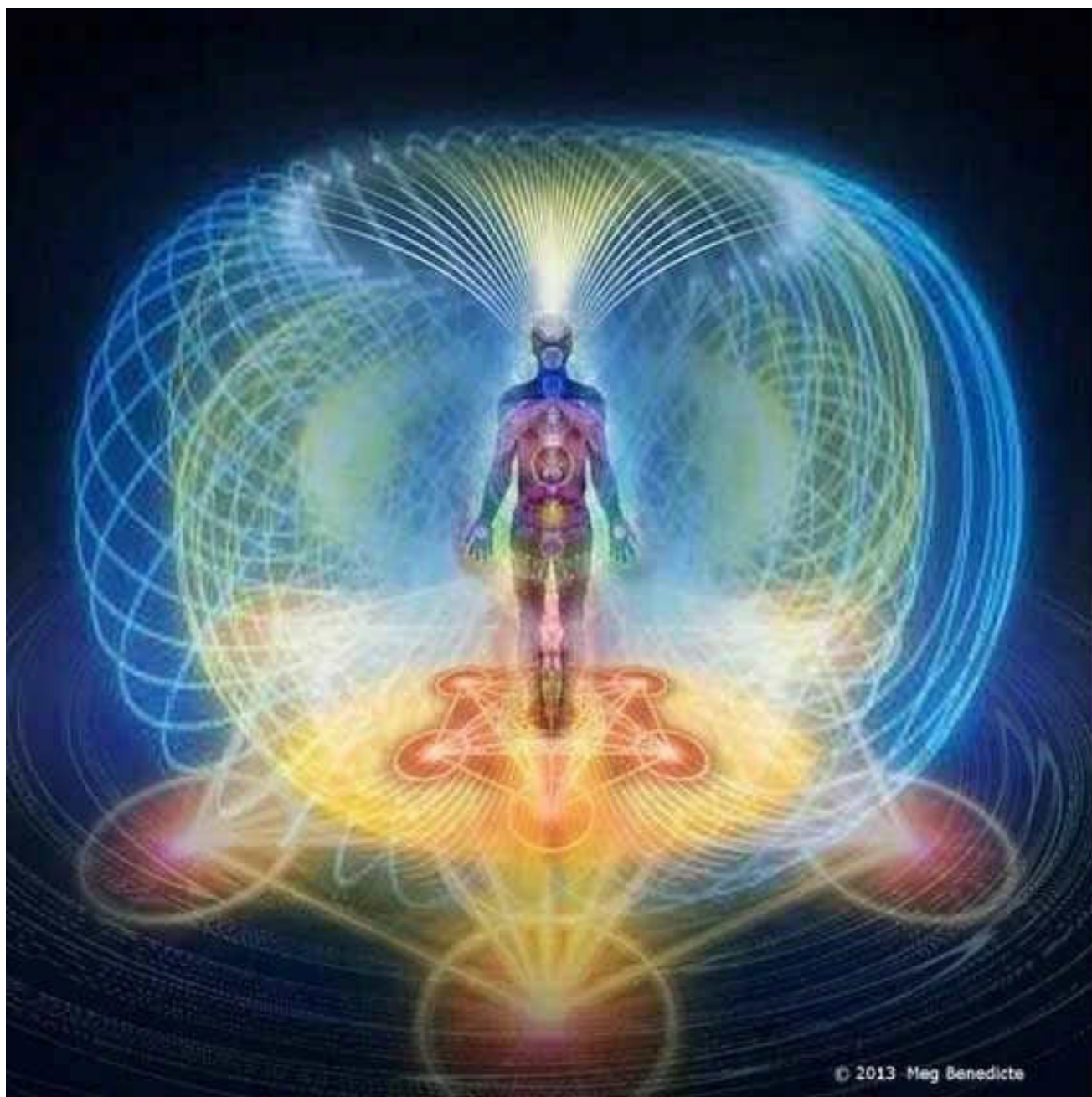


Image courtesy of Chaplain Jodi Dehn.

There is a rhythm beneath the rhythm of life—a hidden pulse that thrums through our bodies, our planet, and the cosmos itself. Some feel it during meditation, some in the hush of sacred sites, others in moments of inexplicable peace. Mystics and healers across time have called this pulse many names: the light body, the etheric web, the crystalline matrix. But one of the most intriguing ways to describe it is the bio-grid—the luminous energetic lattice that holds our physical, emotional, and spiritual forms in exquisite harmony.

The bio-grid is the invisible scaffolding of existence. It is both blueprint and bridge, linking the density of the physical world to the refinement of the divine. Within it, the elements—earth, air, fire, water, spirit, and ether—interlace like golden filaments, creating pathways that allow energy, consciousness, and even angelic intelligence to flow. And it is through this subtle architecture that the angelic realm communicates, heals, and evolves with us.

To understand the angelic connection to our bio-grid is to glimpse how deeply we are woven into the fabric of creation. Angels are not distant, detached beings floating in some unreachable heaven. They are intelligences of light that breathe through the same elemental essence that animates our bodies and our planet. They are participants in the grid of being—the divine engineers, if you will, of balance, transmission, and awakening.

The Bio-Grid as Living Geometry

Every living thing, from a human cell to a galaxy, expresses a geometry. Within that geometry is frequency, within that frequency is consciousness. Our personal bio-grid is an extension of this cosmic geometry—an electromagnetic, crystalline web that responds to both the physical and the spiritual. It hums beneath the skin, tracing the pathways known in ancient cultures as nadis, meridians, or ley lines of the body.

Science brushes against this mystery in the study of bio-photons and electromagnetic coherence, while the esoteric traditions have long mapped it through sacred

geometry and chakra systems. But beyond structure, the bio-grid is a story—a symphony of how our inner world meets the outer one.

Each of us is a living node within a planetary lattice. Just as the Earth possesses ley lines connecting sacred sites and power points, our personal grid links every aspect of our being—mind, body, spirit, and soul. When we are balanced, our grid resonates with clarity and coherence. When we are fragmented or wounded, the grid distorts, dimming the light that passes through.

And it is at this intersection—where light, frequency, and matter meet—that angels enter the picture.

Angelic Frequencies and the Architecture of Light

Angels are beings of frequency. They are not merely forms with wings, but radiant patterns of consciousness encoded in light. Their essence is vibrational, and their language is resonance. To communicate with an angel is not so much to hear as to tune. When the subtle harmonics of our bio-grid align with their frequencies, connection happens naturally—sometimes as intuition, sometimes as presence, sometimes as a sudden influx of peace so vast it feels celestial.

In the geometry of the bio-grid, angels occupy the higher nodes—the luminous intersections where human energy interfaces with divine intention. Imagine your grid as a cathedral made of light: each rib and arch a channel for elemental energy, each vaulted dome a chamber of resonance. The angels are the choirs that sing through that architecture, tuning each chamber to its highest potential.

Different angelic orders correspond to different elemental aspects of the grid. Archangel Michael, for instance, aligns with the electric current of fire—the force of will and transformation. Gabriel flows through the fluid conduits of water, bringing emotional purification and intuitive insight. Raphael vibrates with the breath of air, healing through clarity and communication. Uriel, the guardian of Earth, grounds the grid into stability, anchoring heaven's codes into matter. Above and beyond them all hovers the etheric

presence of Metatron, the angel of sacred geometry itself, whose light encodes the mathematical and spiritual architecture of creation.

These are not symbolic correspondences alone—they are living relationships. When we invoke or connect with these beings, our bio-grid literally shifts to meet their resonance. The heart opens; the crown tingles; the air thickens with meaning. Something in the invisible rearranges itself toward greater harmony.

The Elemental Foundation of the Grid

The elements are the scaffolding upon which our angelic interface is built. They are not abstract forces but living consciousness streams that sustain the grid's flow.

The element of Earth forms the root structure—the crystalline lattice that gives density and endurance. It holds the memory of our ancestral lines and the strength of our physical incarnation. Without Earth's stability, our grid would have no anchor, and the higher frequencies would dissipate like lightning without a ground.

Water moves through the grid as emotional conductivity. It is the carrier of memory and the solvent of pain. It washes through the energetic meridians, dissolving resistance so that higher light can travel freely. When our emotional waters stagnate, the grid clogs. When they flow, angels can transmit healing and messages with ease.

Air is the breath of consciousness—the mind's current, the wind of inspiration. It oxygenates the bio-grid, carrying subtle signals from the unseen realms. In meditation or prayer, the breath is not just an anchor; it is the tuning fork that harmonizes us with the angelic frequency bands that float, whisper-like, between dimensions.

Fire burns through the grid as will, courage, and transformation. It is the spark that ignites purpose and illumination. Fire refines the grid, burning away distortion and restoring original coding. Angelic

contact often comes with fire's signature—heat in the hands, a tingling spine, an inner blaze of knowing.

Spirit—the fifth element—integrates all others into coherence. It is the luminous consciousness that animates the grid and gives it purpose. It holds the divine pattern that angels read like a script, assisting us in aligning with our soul's higher path.

And Ether, the often-forgotten sixth, is the angelic bridge itself—the luminous space between worlds. It is through the etheric strata that the angelic orders move, interact, and transmit. Ether is not empty; it is filled with encoded intelligence. When we quiet our minds and expand our awareness, we can feel this subtle hum of living light weaving through the grid, a gentle pressure just beyond thought.

Together, these six elements form the scaffolding of the soul's temple—a structure designed not merely for survival, but for communion.

The Forgotten Science of Resonant Communion

Ancient civilizations understood what modern metaphysics is rediscovering: that the human body is a receiver, a transmitter, and a living temple for divine communication. The Egyptians built pyramids aligned with stellar geometry, understanding that shape amplifies energy. The Greeks spoke of pneuma—the divine breath—as the bridge between gods and mortals. The Celts walked the earth's ley lines, attuning to where energy spiraled most purely.

Each of these traditions hinted at the same truth: that consciousness interacts with geometry and frequency, and that angels—or beings of higher resonance—use these fields as conduits.

When our bio-grid is coherent, we become not only witnesses of divine light but instruments of it. The angels do not descend from outside; they emerge from within the luminous field that already surrounds and permeates us. Their presence is like sunlight refracted through crystal—always there, but revealed only when our facets are clean enough to catch the light.

To open the bio-grid to angelic communion, one must cultivate elemental harmony. This is not achieved through dogma but through presence—breathing deeply, grounding to the earth, flowing with emotion, nurturing clarity of mind, kindling passion, invoking spirit, and surrendering to the etheric field beyond the senses. In this state of elemental coherence, the angelic frequencies find a harmonic match. Connection becomes effortless.

The Bio-Grid as a Planetary Mirror

What happens within us also happens around us. The human bio-grid is not separate from the Earth's; it is an echo of it. Our bodies are microcosmic versions of the planet's ley system. Our chakras mirror the vortices of sacred sites—Mount Shasta for the root, Glastonbury for the heart, Uluru for the solar plexus. When we harmonize our inner grid, we help stabilize the larger planetary lattice.

This is one of the least understood aspects of angelic work. Angels do not merely guide individuals; they maintain the coherence of planetary consciousness. They are grid-technicians of light, tending to the energetic scaffolding of both the Earth and humanity. When we align our personal bio-grid, we become collaborators in that process. Our meditation, prayer, or act of compassion ripples outward through the shared lattice, strengthening the global field.

The angels, in turn, amplify these frequencies. They use our hearts as transmitters, our emotions as conductors, our thoughts as sculptors of reality. Each aligned human becomes a node through which divine intelligence can recalibrate the collective grid. In moments of collective awakening—mass meditation, global healing, acts of unified compassion—this interplay becomes visible as synchronicity, sudden peace, or the palpable lifting of energy across regions.

The Hidden Possibilities Within the Grid

Few realize that the bio-grid is multidimensional. It doesn't end at the skin or the aura; it extends across

timelines and parallel selves. Within its crystalline filaments are records of memory—ancestral, karmic, even interstellar. Angels access these layers when they assist us in deep healing or spiritual acceleration.

When a pattern repeats in life—an emotional loop, a recurring challenge—it often corresponds to a distortion or tear in the grid. Angels can help “re-weave” these areas, infusing them with higher light codes that restore the original harmony. This process may appear as healing, awakening, or a sudden release of burden, but at its core it is a geometrical correction within the architecture of our being.

In advanced spiritual states, some people report seeing or sensing the grid itself—fine lines of living light connecting all things. During prayer, near-death experiences, or profound love, the grid becomes perceptible: a shimmering net of gold or silver threads stretching into infinity. It is in this luminous space that angels dwell—not above us, but through us, their wings the very currents of energy that keep creation in motion.

Recalibrating for the New Frequencies

Many sense that the Earth's frequency is changing. Solar activity, magnetic shifts, and collective consciousness waves all contribute to a kind of energetic quickening. As the planetary grid upgrades, our personal grids must adapt. This is why so many feel the pull toward spiritual realignment, grounding, or awakening in recent years. The body is learning to hold more light, and the angels are guiding this evolution from the unseen planes.

Their role is not to rescue humanity but to remind us of our own design. They whisper, adjust, nudge, and illuminate—subtly guiding us to remember that we, too, are architects of light. When we consciously participate in this recalibration—through meditation, nature connection, creative expression, or service—the angelic resonance grows stronger. We begin to live as co-creators rather than seekers.

This is the new covenant between heaven and Earth: not separation, but collaboration. The angels are not outside the story; they are within the circuitry of it. They work through our choices, our breath, our compassion. Every act of love stabilizes the grid. Every conscious breath realigns the elements. Every moment of gratitude opens another filament of light.

A Temple Remembered

To live in awareness of the bio-grid is to reclaim an ancient knowing—that we are not isolated beings moving through a disconnected world, but radiant structures of light participating in an ongoing creation. The grid is the temple, and the angels are its stewards. Within its luminous walls, the elements sing, the soul remembers, and the divine hum of the cosmos passes through every cell.

When you close your eyes and breathe, when you feel the earth beneath and the sky above, you are standing at the center of that temple. The archways are your meridians; the altar is your heart; the flame upon it is your spirit. And above, through the high vault of ether, the angels move in golden spirals, whispering the truth that has always been yours: you are light in form, geometry in motion, creation in remembrance.

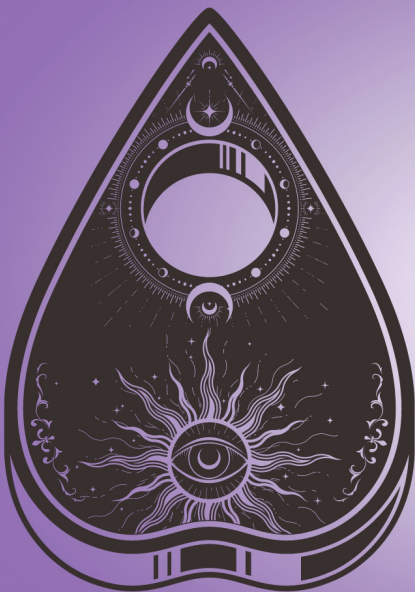
The grid within you is the same that lights the stars, shapes the tides, and guides the wings of angels. To align with it is not to reach upward, but inward—to the silent brilliance where matter and spirit meet.

For in that meeting lies the secret the ancients always knew, and the angels have never stopped singing: that heaven was never somewhere else. It is here, breathing through you, mapped in light, waiting to be remembered. ■

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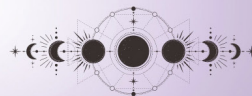
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